(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be installed in Ladakh region?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Two VSATs have been sanctioned for installation at PADUM and NYOMA.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Question does not arise in view of reply given under Part (b) above.

(d) VSAT at PADUM has been installed. Satellite earth station is already working at Those for Diskit.

VASAT at Nyoma and Sanku is likely to be installed during 1997-98 subject to availability of equipment.

[Translation]

Supply of Pure Quality of Coal by CIL to SAIL

969. JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA
SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item appearing in the Hindustan Times dated October 17, 1996 captioned "SAIL not to pay for CIL's inefficiency";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that several public sector steel plants have been forced to close down production due to the price and quality of coal being supplied by CIL;

(c) if so, the details thereof and

(d) the names of the plants which have decided to close down?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Do not arise in view of (b) above.

Promotion of Tourism in States

970. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the scheme-wise amount provided by the Union Government to the States during the current year;

(b) whether the hilly States have sent any schemes for the promotion of tourism; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Union Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) to (c). During the current financial year the Department of Tourism has identified projects amounting to Rs. 3389.43 lakhs for Financial Assistant's to State/ Union Territory Govts. including the Hilly States. The funds to the State Governments are released on receipt of detailed project proposals.

[English]

Expenditure Incurred on Gauge Conversion

971. SHRI R. DEVADASS : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state : the total expenditure incurred on conversion of gauges, providing new lines and additional trains during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : The details are as under :

New Lines		Gauge Conversion
93-94	- 213.41 crs.	815.13 crs.
94-95	- 193.61 crs.	1180.29 crs.
95-96	- 209.00 crs.	1174.97 crs.
Total	616.02 crs.	3170.39 crs.

Expenditure incurred on introduction of trains is not maintained.

Railways do not maintain information on expenditure incurred Statewise.

Acute Shortage of Personnel in I.A.

972. SHRI UTTAMSINGH PAWAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is acute shortage of Pilots Commanders, Instructors in the Indian Airlines, and

(b) if so, the details thereof and remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Indian Airlines has taken the following steps to overcome the shortage of commanders :

- Appointment of contractual Pilots.
- Reappointment of Pilots who had earlier left Indian Airlines.
- New agreement for revision in career pattern, providing for swifter command/conversion training.
- Appointment of B-737 Commanders from the open market.
- Promotion of Pilots to Executive cadre, resulting in increase in flyinghours, flexibility

of roster/utilization and availability of Pilots in unforeseen contigencies.

Employees State Insurance (ESI)

973. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV
SHRI CHITTA BASU
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY
SHRI N.J. RATHWA

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state

(a) the total number of employees covered under the Employees State Insurance;

(b) whether the ESI propose to bring 10 lakh more industrial workers by revising its eligibility criteria under the cover of ESI;

(c) if so, whether this issue figured at the recently held Conference of Labour Ministers of States;

(d) if so, whether some State Governments have supported the enhancement of wage limit and also increase in the rate of contribution;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) steps taken by the Government for better relation between employer and employee to boost the production?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) 66.13 Lakhs.

(b) to (e) The Labour Ministers' Conference of major States was held on 4.10.96. The Conference recommended enhancement of the wage limit for coverage from Rs. 3000/- to Rs. 6500/- and also for enhancement of the employees' contribution from 1.5% to 1.75% and employers' contribution from 4% to 4.75% of the monthly wage. Based on the recommendations of the Conference a draft notification to carry out necessary amendments in the ESI (Central) Rules, 1950 has since been issued on 31.10.96 for objections/suggestions of all concerned. Nearly 9.60 Lakh industrial workers are expected to be brought back under the ESI Scheme on issue of the amended notification.

(f) Improving employer-employee relationship and increasing productivity is a continuous process. In furtherance of these objectives the Government has recently revised the rates of Compensation under the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923. A new comprehensive Pension Scheme for industrial workers has also been introduced with effect from 16.11.1995.

Aviation Sphere

974. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have established cooperation with United States in the aviation sphere;

(b) if so, the details of the agreement made between both the countries in this regard;

(c) whether efforts are being made by the Government for Indo-US relations in the field of aviation; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) to (d) The Air Transport Agreement between India and U.S.A. was signed in 1956. The provisions of this Agreement are reviewed by the two Governments from time to time to take care of the changing traffic requirements. Salient features of the Agreement at the last round of bilateral discussions held in November/December 1995 between the two sides are :

(i) Indian carriers will have access to ten additional points of call in the US.

(ii) The rights to operate to Chicago and Washington for the Indian carrier would also include fifth freedom traffic rights between London and these two points upto a maximum of seven frequencies per week. Traffic rights between London and Chicago are restricted to a maximum of three frequencies per week. Traffic rights to all the ten new points are unrestricted through all other points including those in Europe.

(iii) US airlines have been granted two additional points of call of India.

(iv) Code share arrangement has been agreed between Air India and United Airlines for the latter's round the - world operation introduced with effect from December 15, 1995. In addition, code share flights can also be operated with airlines of any third country.

(v) North West Airlines of USA will not be allowed entry upto January, 1997. No other US airline will start direct operations to India until 1st November, 1998.

[Translation]

Manufacturing of Railway Wagons and Coaches

975. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the Railway Wagons and Coaches manufacturing institutions in Public/Private Sectors including their installed capacities;

(b) whether these institutions have able to tap their installed capacity;